

## ONLY LOVERS LEFT ALIVE

Imagine the country taken over by teenagers. The oldies have "done it": with Easiway pills, they have yielded to the universal weariness and quietly died. The dustbins begin to overflow: the power stations, the presses, broadcasting, public services and Government itself stop.

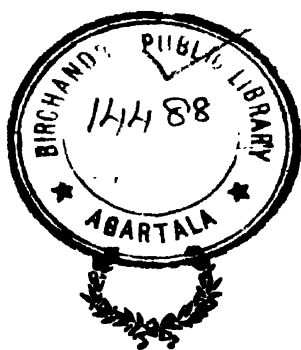
Free to smash, loot, and love as they like, the gangs roar, on their brand-new expendable motor-bikes, through the littered streets. By now, the currency is baked beans, lipstick and petrol. They begin to run out. Shortage leads to warfare.

**Dave Wallis**  
**has also written**  
**PAVED WITH GOLD**  
**TRAM STOP ON THE NILE**

# Only Lovers Left Alive

*by*

DAVE WALLIS



ANTHONY BLOND

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If all men died at forty-five  
Save poets and musicians,  
And only lovers were left alive  
To throng their exhibitions . . .

*Jack Lindsay.*



*BOOK ONE*

**EVERYBODY'S DOING IT**





# 1

"So, in any average year about five thousand inhabitants of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland commit suicide," said Mr. Oliver to his class half an hour before he killed himself. He laid on the desk a copy of the Annual Abstract of Statistics stamped, "Seely Estate Comprehensive School. NOT TO BE REMOVED FROM LIBRARY." The disclosure fell as flatly as the rain outside. The boys and girls of the upper sixth continued to regard him in a politely jaded fashion. "Rather an interesting figure," said Mr. Oliver brightly. His left shoe lace had broken and in order to move he was obliged to curl up his toes. "Rather an interesting figure," he repeated. He was about to take a slight step forward towards the front row of desks but remembered the shoe and leaned his thin body forward instead.

Kathy Williams raised her head. The blonde bubble of her hair construction quivered slightly. She uncrossed her long and shapely legs in a manner disturbing to the young men in the room who even fancied that they could hear the faint hiss of her nylons rubbing together.

"Why isn't it ever more or less?" she asked, "five hundred or five million?"

"Or only five," said a boy who was experimenting with a new, very deep tone of voice.

"That's just it, you see?" said Mr. Oliver. "That's just what's so fascinating about this sort of thing. No